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RESEARCH MEMORANDUM

PRELIMINARY EVALUATION OF TURBINE PERFORMANCE WITH VARIABLE-AREA TURBINE NOZZLES IN A TURBOJET ENGINE

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SUMMARY

The performance of a two-stage turbine with variable-area first-stage turbine nozzles was determined in the NACA Lewis altitude wind tunnel over a range of simulated altitudes from 15,000 to 44,000 feet and engine speeds from 50 to 100 percent of rated speed. The variable-area turbine nozzles used in this investigation were primarily a test device for compressor research purposes and were not necessarily of optimum aerodynamic design. The results of this investigation are indicative of effects of turbine-nozzle-area variation on turbine performance within the operating range allowed by the engine. The variable-area turbine nozzles were found to be mechanically reliable and to have negligible leakage losses. Increasing the turbine-nozzle-throat area from 1.15 to 1.67 square feet increased the corrected turbine gas flow or effective turbine nozzle area about 10 percent. At a given corrected turbine speed and turbine pressure ratio, changing the turbine nozzle area from 1.30 to 1.67 square feet lowered the turbine efficiency 3 or 4 percent. The effect of increasing the turbine nozzle area from 1.15 to 1.67 square feet (decreasing the turning angle about $7\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$) would be to lower the turbine efficiency about 5 or 6 percent.

INTRODUCTION

Analyses such as that given in reference 1 indicate the performance and operational advantages to be gained by utilization of variable-area turbine nozzles in turbojet engines. When combined with a proper speed control, the variable turbine nozzle can greatly increase the thrust capability of supersonic turbojet engines because of increased flexibility in matching of the compressor and turbine over a wide range of flight conditions. Furthermore, potential improvements in specific fuel consumption, particularly at thrust values below rated thrust, are possible for engines equipped with both variable-area turbine nozzles and variable-area exhaust nozzles (reference 1). In both these analyses, it was assumed that turbine efficiency was not affected by changes in the area or angle of the turbine nozzles. However, aside from analytical treatment of the problem, there exists at the present time a lack of

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experimental data on the performance of variable-area turbine nozzles operating as integral components of full-scale turbojet engines. Complexity and mechanical reliability have been the main deterrent factors in obtaining experimental data and in the utilization of variable turbine nozzles in present turbojet engine designs.

During a study of the surge characteristics of a turbojet engine fitted with variable-area first-stage turbine nozzles in the NACA Lewis altitude wind tunnel, it was possible to obtain some preliminary data on the effect of these nozzles on the performance of the two-stage turbine. The effect of the variable-area turbine nozzles on the efficiency and gas flow characteristics of the turbine are presented herein. The variable-area turbine nozzles investigated in this study were intended primarily to provide a variable compressor pressure ratio independent of engine speed and turbine-inlet temperature for compressor research purposes; therefore, the aerodynamic design of the nozzles was not necessarily optimum. Furthermore, the turbine rotors and the second-stage stator were designed for fixed-area first-stage nozzles. The experimental results obtained in this investigation, therefore, do not represent the best turbine performance obtainable with variable-area turbine nozzles, but serve instead as a preliminary indicator of general performance and mechanical problems.

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Corrected turbine gas flow and turbine efficiency are presented as functions of corrected turbine speed and turbine pressure ratio to show the effects of turbine nozzle area and nozzle angle on turbine performance. The turbine efficiency obtained with the original fixed turbine nozzles is compared with the turbine efficiency obtained with the variable turbine nozzles at a position corresponding to approximately the same throat area and turning angle. All turbine performance data obtained with the variable turbine nozzles are presented in numerical form in table I.

INSTALLATION AND INSTRUMENTATION

Engine

The engine was mounted on a wing section which extended across the 20-foot-diameter test section of the altitude wind tunnel (fig. 1). Dry refrigerated air was supplied to the engine from the tunnel make-up air system through a duct connected to the engine inlet. Manually controlled butterfly valves in this duct were used to adjust the total pressure of the refrigerated air at the engine inlet to correspond to the desired flight condition, while the static pressure in the tunnel test section was maintained to correspond to the desired altitude. A slip joint with a frictionless seal in the duct permitted the measurement of thrust and installation drag with the tunnel scales.

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The engine used in this investigation was a J40-WE-6, which had a sea-level rating of 7500 pounds of jet thrust at an engine speed of 7260 rpm and a turbine-inlet temperature of 1425° F. At this rating, the compressor pressure ratio was about 5.0 and the engine air flow was 140 pounds per second. A cross-section of the engine is presented in figure 2 showing the main components of the engine which included an eleven-stage axial-flow compressor, a single-annulus basket-type combustor, a two-stage turbine, and a clamshell-type variable-area exhaust nozzle. The engine was equipped with an electronic control that varied engine fuel flow and exhaust-nozzle area to maintain a schedule of turbine-outlet temperature and engine speed.

The original J40-WE-6 engine was modified before the investigation reported herein by replacing the compressor-outlet straightening-vane assembly with a two-element mixer-vane assembly, by using a slightly modified combustor basket, and by replacing the first-stage fixed turbine nozzles with a variable turbine-nozzle diaphragm. The original control was also modified to permit independent control of engine speed and exhaust-nozzle area.

Turbine

Both first- and second-stage turbine disks were solid steel and had an outer diameter of 21.90 inches. The first-stage rotor disk had 62 high-temperature-alloy blades fitted into its outer rim (fig. 3(a)) and the second stage contained 32 blades of the same material (fig. 3(b)). All turbine rotor blades were 5.50 inches in length; the turbine tip diameter was thus 32.90 inches and the hub-tip radius ratio was 0.666. The radial tip clearance for the turbine rotors was $5/32$ inch.

The first-stage or variable turbine-nozzle diaphragm consisted of 56 high-temperature-alloy vanes which could be rotated between an inner and outer shroud (figs. 4(a) and 4(b)). All vanes were rotated simultaneously by an actuating mechanism similar to the one shown schematically in figure 5. The single actuating shaft extending through the engine outer skin was actuated by an externally mounted worm-gear drive. Changing the turbine-nozzle vane angle varied the nozzle throat area and also the angle that the fluid is turned in passing through the nozzles. Mid-vane cross sections of two adjacent turbine nozzle vanes are shown in the open and closed positions in figure 6. The solid-line section shows the vanes in the open position corresponding to a geometric throat area of 1.67 square feet and a turning angle at the throat of approximately 54.5° . The dashed-line section corresponds to the closed position with a throat area of 1.15 square feet and turning angle of about 62° . The original fixed turbine nozzles, for which the turbine rotors and second-stage nozzles were designed, corresponded closely to the variable turbine-nozzle setting that provided a throat area of 1.30 square feet and a turning angle of about 59° .

The second-stage or interstage stator consisted of 60 high-temperature-alloy vanes welded to an inner and outer shroud with a fixed nozzle-throat area of approximately 1.81 square feet. The annular passage through the turbine from first-stage nozzles to turbine outlet had approximately constant inner and outer diameters; the unblocked annular area was about 3.4 square feet.

Instrumentation

Stations at which instrumentation was installed within the engine for measuring pressures and temperatures are shown in figure 2. The number of total and static pressure tubes, static pressure orifices, and thermocouples installed at each measuring station is shown in tabular form in this figure. Schematic sketches of the instrumentation at the cowl inlet (station 1), compressor outlet (station 4), turbine inlet (station 5), and turbine outlet (station 6) are shown in figure 7. Fuel flow was measured by calibrated rotameters and engine speed was measured by a stroboscopic tachometer.

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Procedure

Data were obtained at altitudes of 15,000, 30,000, 40,000, and 44,000 feet at various flight Mach numbers from 0.14 to 0.62. Extensive performance data were obtained at an altitude of 30,000 feet and a flight Mach number of 0.62. At this flight condition, the variable turbine nozzles were set at five different positions and at each nozzle position the engine was operated at six different speeds from 3630 to 7260 rpm (rated speed). At each turbine-nozzle setting and engine speed, the exhaust nozzle was varied from the wide-open position to full closed, or until limiting turbine temperature was approached, to extend the range of turbine pressure ratio and corrected turbine speed. The ranges of turbine pressure ratio, corrected turbine speed, turbine nozzle area, and engine speed covered at this flight condition are shown in the following table:

Engine speed, rpm	3630 to 7260
Measured turbine-nozzle-throat area, sq ft	1.15 to 1.67
Turbine pressure ratio	1.57 to 3.00
Corrected turbine speed, rpm	2663 to 4407

The symbols and methods of calculation used to determine the turbine performance are given in the appendix.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Inasmuch as the primary object is to show the effect of turbine nozzle area on turbine performance, curves are shown only for an altitude of 30,000 feet and a flight Mach number of 0.62 where the most extensive investigation was made. Data obtained at all of the flight conditions investigated are presented in numerical form in table I.

Corrected Turbine Gas Flow

The variation of corrected turbine gas flow with corrected turbine speed for all five turbine nozzle areas is shown in figure 8 for an altitude of 30,000 feet and a flight Mach number of 0.62. Although turbine pressure ratio is not a direct function of corrected turbine speed, lines of constant turbine pressure ratio have been superimposed to indicate approximately the general increase in turbine pressure ratio with increased corrected turbine speed at each turbine nozzle area. For each of the five nozzle areas, the corrected gas flow increased with corrected turbine speed to a maximum value and was unaffected by further increases in corrected turbine speed or turbine pressure ratio. Failure of the corrected gas flow to increase at high corrected turbine speeds (and high turbine pressure ratios) is attributed to choking of the flow at some station within the turbine. The turbine pressure ratio for choking varied from about 2.6 at a turbine nozzle area of 1.15 square feet to about 2.2 at an area of 1.67 square feet. However, these values of turbine pressure ratio at the transition point between choked and unchoked flow are very approximate because of the data inaccuracy in the low range of turbine pressure ratios.

The maximum corrected turbine gas flow (choked conditions) obtained at each nozzle area is shown in figure 9. This curve is also a measure of effective turbine-nozzle throat area inasmuch as corrected turbine gas flow is directly proportional to effective area when the nozzles are choked. Over the range of actual turbine nozzle areas from 1.15 to 1.67 square feet, the effective turbine nozzle area varied from 1.13 to 1.25 square feet for an effective area range of approximately 10 percent. It is apparent that the effective and measured areas are nearly equal at small area settings of the nozzles but the effective area is considerably smaller than the measured area at large area settings. This indicates a reduction in nozzle flow coefficient (defined as the ratio of effective area to measured area) from about 0.98 to 0.75 as the nozzles are opened. This large reduction in indicated flow coefficient may be caused by choking at some station within the turbine other than the inlet nozzles. However, inasmuch as interstage pressures and temperatures were not measured, the location of the choking station within the turbine could not be determined with certainty.

Turbine Efficiency

The turbine efficiencies obtained with all five turbine nozzle areas at an altitude of 30,000 feet and a flight Mach number of 0.62 are shown in figure 10 as a function of corrected turbine speed. The maximum turbine efficiency obtained was 0.87 with the smallest turbine nozzle area and a high corrected turbine speed. The minimum turbine efficiency was about 0.70 with the largest nozzle area and a low corrected turbine speed. In general, turbine efficiency increased with corrected turbine speed for all turbine nozzle areas and was lowered by increasing the turbine nozzle area (decreasing the nozzle turning angle) at a given corrected turbine speed. These general effects, however, are not clearly separated in figure 10 because the effects of turbine pressure ratio have not been accounted for.

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In figures 11(a) and (b) to 15(a) and (b), operating lines of turbine pressure ratio and turbine efficiency are shown as functions of corrected turbine speed for each engine speed and turbine nozzle area. Although turbine efficiency is not a direct function of engine speed, lines of constant engine speed have been faired for the turbine efficiency data for the purpose of obtaining cross plots. The cross plots of turbine efficiency against corrected turbine speed for constant values of turbine pressure ratio obtained from parts (a) and (b) of figures 11 to 15 are shown in parts (c) of these figures. At a constant turbine pressure ratio, turbine efficiency increased with increased corrected turbine speed. This trend occurred at all values of constant turbine pressure ratio for which cross plots could be obtained at each turbine nozzle area. The maximum range of corrected turbine speed obtainable at a constant turbine pressure ratio was about 200 rpm and the average increase in turbine efficiency for this increase in corrected turbine speed was about 4 percent. However, the rate of increase in turbine efficiency with increased corrected turbine speed was greater at the lower values of constant turbine pressure ratio. At a given corrected turbine speed, turbine efficiency increased with reduced turbine pressure ratio, but the corrected turbine speed could be maintained constant only for a very small range of turbine pressure ratios.

The effect of changing turbine nozzle area and turning angle on turbine efficiency at a given corrected turbine speed and turbine pressure ratio is shown in figure 16. The symbols, which represent cross-plotted data points rather than actual data points, have been included to indicate the accuracy of the cross-plotted data as well as for distinguishing between turbine nozzle areas. In all cases where a comparison could be made at the same turbine pressure ratio and corrected turbine speed, the turbine efficiency was lowered by increasing the turbine nozzle area. Changing the turbine nozzle area from 1.30 to 1.67 square feet at constant values of corrected turbine speed and turbine pressure ratio

lowered the turbine efficiency by 3 or 4 percent. It is probable that the reduction in turbine efficiency over the complete range of turbine nozzle areas (decreasing the turning angle about $7\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$) would not be more than about 5 or 6 percent in the region of high corrected turbine speeds and turbine pressure ratios.

A comparison of turbine efficiencies obtained with the original fixed turbine nozzles and with the variable turbine nozzles at a corresponding area setting and at the same flight conditions and engine speed is shown in figure 17. The slightly lower turbine efficiency of about 1 percent (which is less than the data accuracy spread) obtained with the variable turbine nozzles indicates that the leakage losses with the variable nozzles were very small.

Mechanical Reliability

The variable-area turbine-nozzle diaphragm was installed in the engine during approximately 240 hours of engine operation and only minor mechanical difficulties were encountered during this period. Although the turbine nozzle area was not varied frequently during the part of the engine investigation reported herein, a great many changes in nozzle area were made during other parts of the investigation. The nozzles were at low physical loading conditions most of the time because most of the investigation was conducted at high altitudes, but inasmuch as a large part of the total operating time was at military speed and temperature, it is felt that these tests were a good indication of variable turbine nozzle life. Calibrations of turbine-nozzle-throat dimensions versus indicated nozzle setting showed good reproducibility of turbine nozzle areas.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The variable-area turbine nozzles were found to be mechanically reliable and to have negligible leakage losses. It was possible to achieve a variation in corrected turbine gas flow or effective turbine nozzle area of about 10 percent by use of these variable turbine nozzles. At a given corrected turbine speed and turbine pressure ratio, changing the turbine nozzle area from 1.30 to 1.67 square feet lowered the turbine efficiency by 3 or 4 percent. The effect of increasing the turbine nozzle area from 1.15 to 1.67 square feet (decreasing the turning angle about $7\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$) would probably lower the turbine efficiency about 5 or 6 percent.

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APPENDIX - CALCULATIONS

Symbols

The following symbols are used in this report:

A	cross-sectional area, sq ft
g	acceleration due to gravity, 32.2 ft/sec ²
H	enthalpy of air or gas mixture, Btu/lb
N	engine speed, rpm
P	total pressure, lb/sq ft absolute
p	static pressure, lb/sq ft absolute
R	gas constant, 53.4 ft-lb/lb-°R
T	total temperature, °R
T _i	indicated temperature, °R
v	velocity, ft/sec
w _a	air flow, lb/sec
w _f	fuel flow, lb/hr
w _g	gas flow, lb/sec
α	thermocouple impact recovery factor, 0.85
γ	ratio of specific heats for gases
δ	pressure correction factor, P/2116 (total pressure divided by NACA standard sea-level pressure)
η	adiabatic efficiency
θ	temperature correction factor, γT/(1.4)(519), (product of γ and total temperature divided by product of γ and temperature for air at NACA standard sea-level conditions)
ρ	density, slugs/cu ft

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Corrected parameters:

$N/\sqrt{\theta_5}$ corrected turbine speed, rpm

T_5/θ_2 corrected turbine-inlet temperature, °R

$\frac{W_g \sqrt{\theta_5}}{\delta_5(\gamma_5/1.4)}$ corrected turbine-inlet gas flow, lb/sec

$\Delta H_t/\theta_5$ corrected turbine enthalpy drop, Btu/lb

Subscripts:

a air

g gas mixture

t turbine

l cowl inlet

2 compressor inlet

4 compressor outlet

5 turbine inlet

6 turbine outlet

Methods of Calculation

Total temperatures were calculated from thermocouple indicated temperatures with the equation

$$T = \frac{T_i \left(\frac{P}{P} \right)^{\frac{\gamma-1}{\gamma}}}{1 + \alpha \left[\left(\frac{P}{P} \right)^{\frac{\gamma-1}{\gamma}} - 1 \right]} \quad (1)$$

Air flow. - Air flow was determined from pressure and temperature measurements at the cowl inlet (station 1) by use of the equation

$$W_{a,1} = g \rho_1 A_1 V_1 = A_1 \sqrt{\frac{2g}{R}} \left(\frac{P_1}{\sqrt{T_1}} \right) \sqrt{\left(\frac{r_1}{r_{1-l}} \right) \left(\frac{P_1}{p_1} \right)} \frac{r_{1-l}}{r_1} \left[\left(\frac{P_1}{p_1} \right) \frac{r_{1-l}}{r_1} - 1 \right] \quad (2)$$

Gas flow. - Gas flow was calculated from fuel-flow measurements and cowl-inlet air flow as follows:

$$W_g = W_{a,1} + W_f / 3600 \quad (3)$$

Turbine-inlet temperature. - Turbine-inlet temperature was determined from the enthalpy and fuel-air ratio at the turbine inlet by use of temperature-enthalpy tables. Turbine-inlet enthalpy was calculated from the following equation which assumes that the turbine enthalpy drop equals the compressor enthalpy rise:

$$H_{g,5} = H_{g,6} + \frac{W_{a,1}}{W_g} (H_{a,4} - H_{a,2}) \quad (4)$$

Turbine efficiency. - The turbine adiabatic efficiency was determined from the following equation:

$$\eta_t = \frac{1 - \frac{T_6}{T_5}}{1 - \left(\frac{P_6}{P_5} \right) \frac{r_{t-l}}{r_t}} \quad (5)$$

where r_t is the average value of r between stations 5 and 6.

REFERENCES

1. Silvern, David H., and Slivka, William R.: Analytical Investigation of Turbines with Adjustable Stator Blades and Effect of These Turbines on Jet-Engine Performance. NACA RM E50E05, 1950.

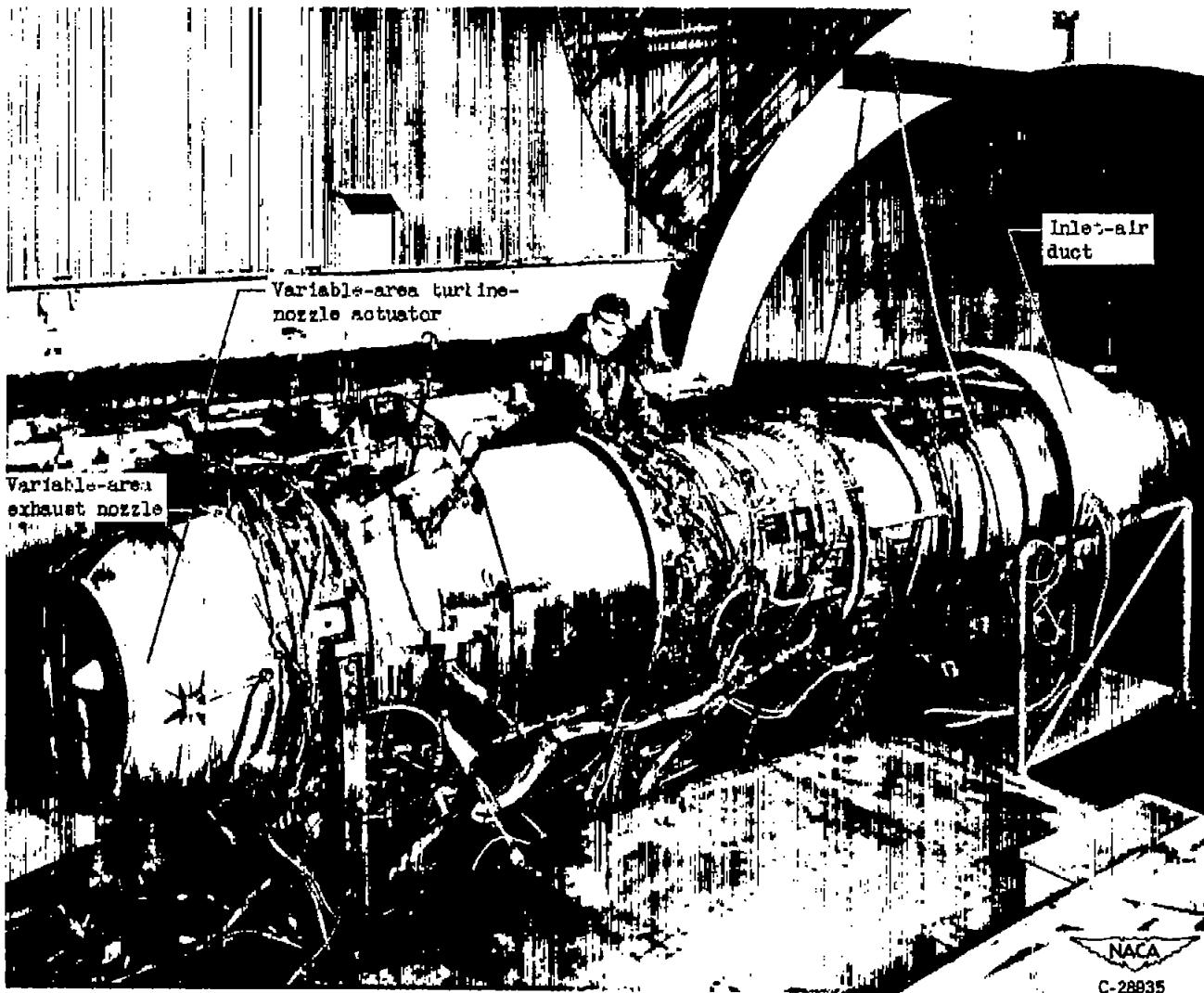
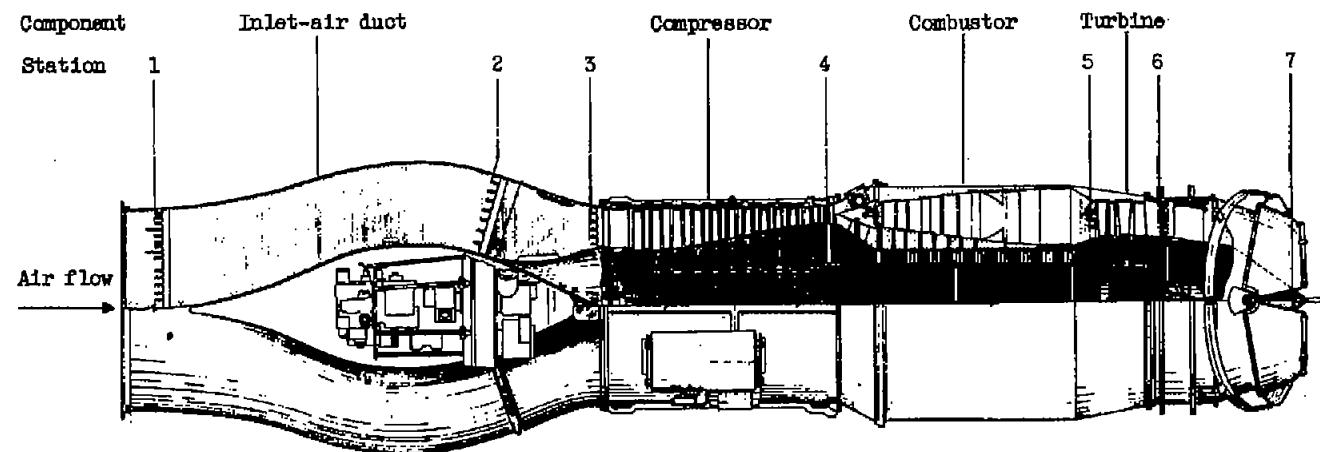


Figure 1. - Installation of turbojet engine in altitude wind tunnel.

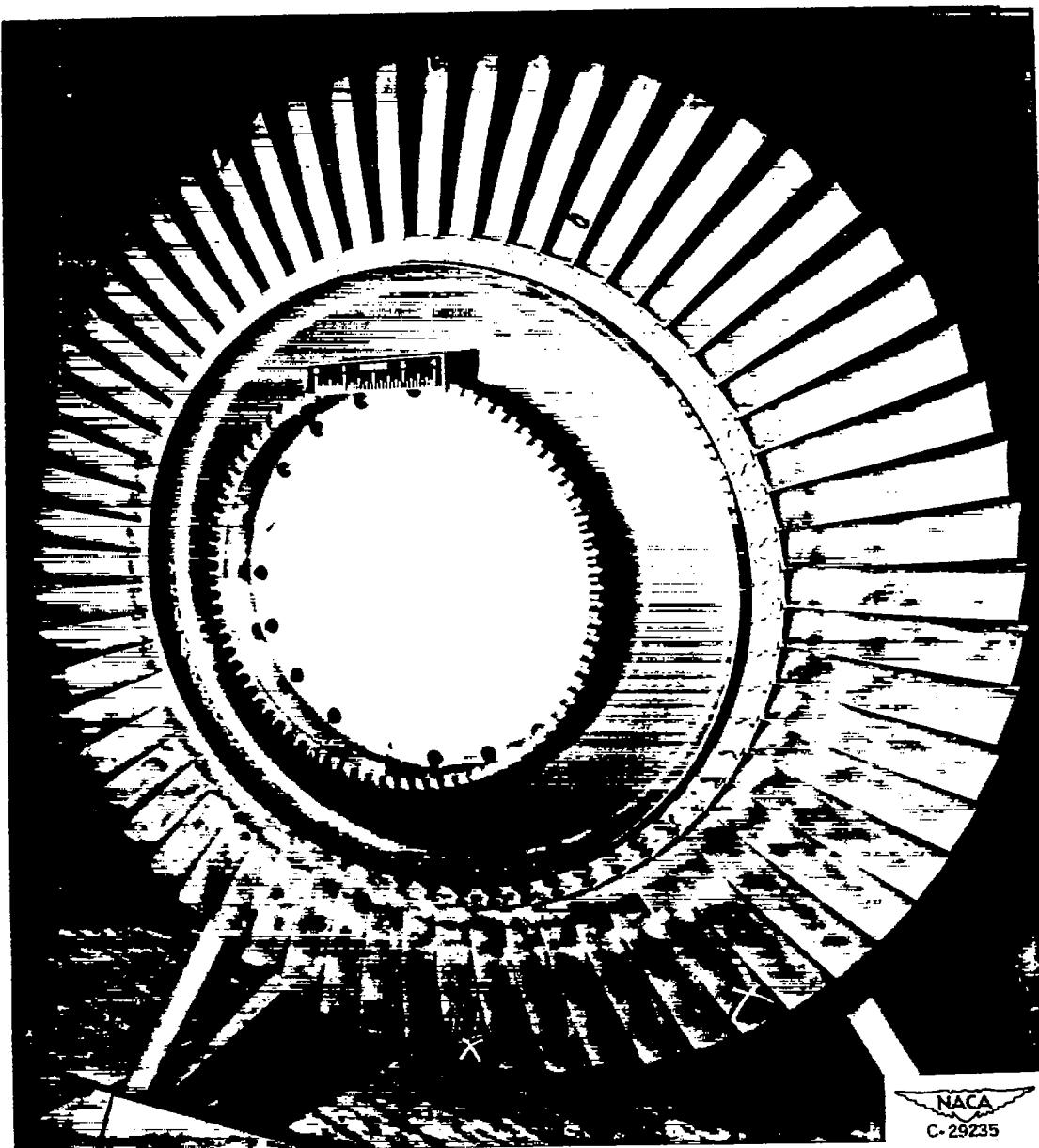


Station	Location	Total pressure tubes	Static pressure tubes	Wall static pressure orifices	Thermo-couples
1	Inlet-air duct	29	12	4	10
2	Engine inlet	18	0	4	0
3	Compressor inlet	23	5	7	0
4	Compressor outlet	15	0	2	6
5	Turbine inlet	5	0	0	0
6	Turbine outlet	20	0	8	24
7	Exhaust-nozzle outlet	16	2	8	0

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Figure 2. - Top view of turbojet-engine installation showing stations at which instrumentation was installed

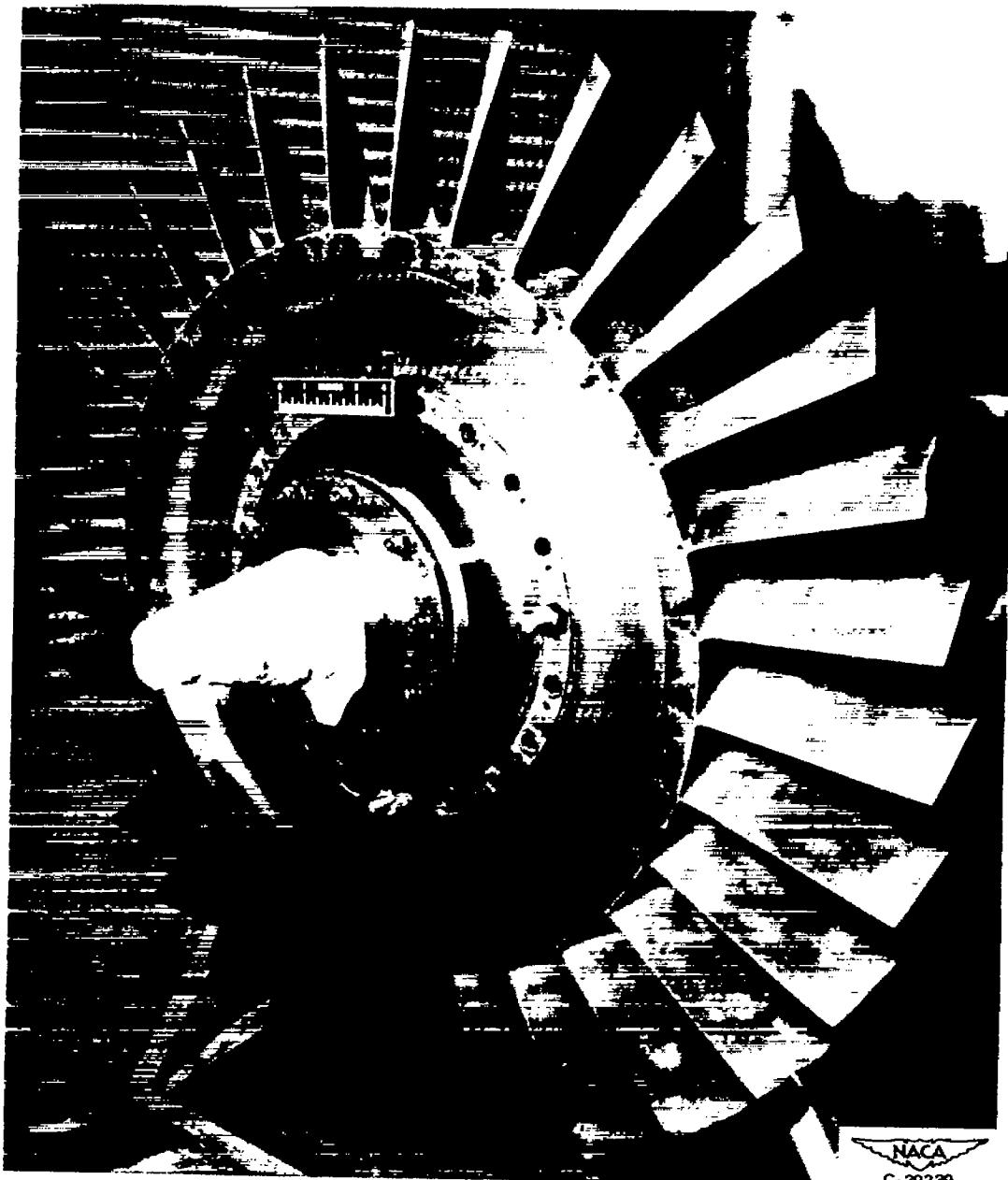
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(a) First-stage turbine rotor.

Figure 3. - Photographs of turbine rotors.

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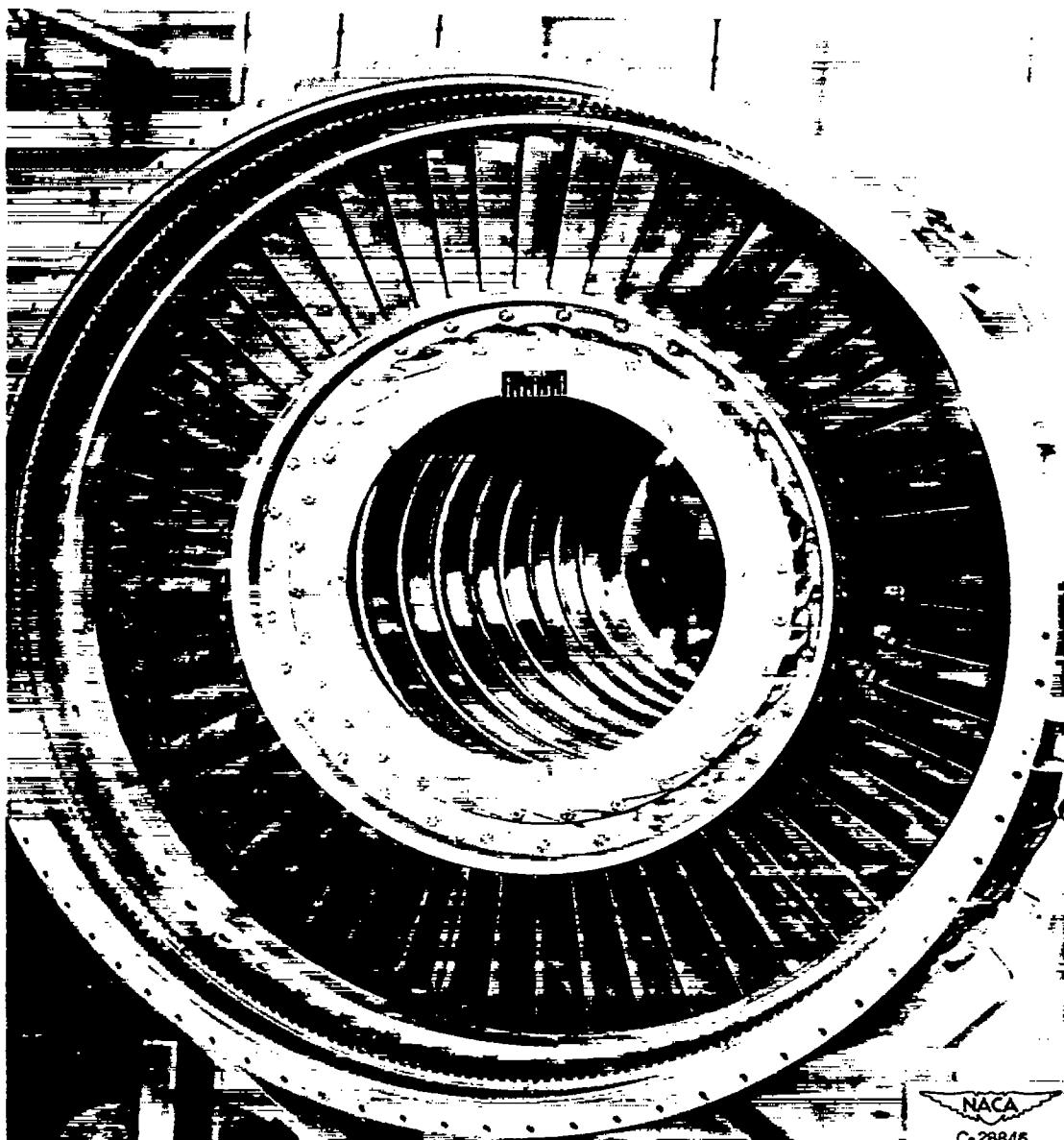


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(b) Second-stage turbine rotor.

Figure 3. - Concluded. Photographs of turbine rotors.

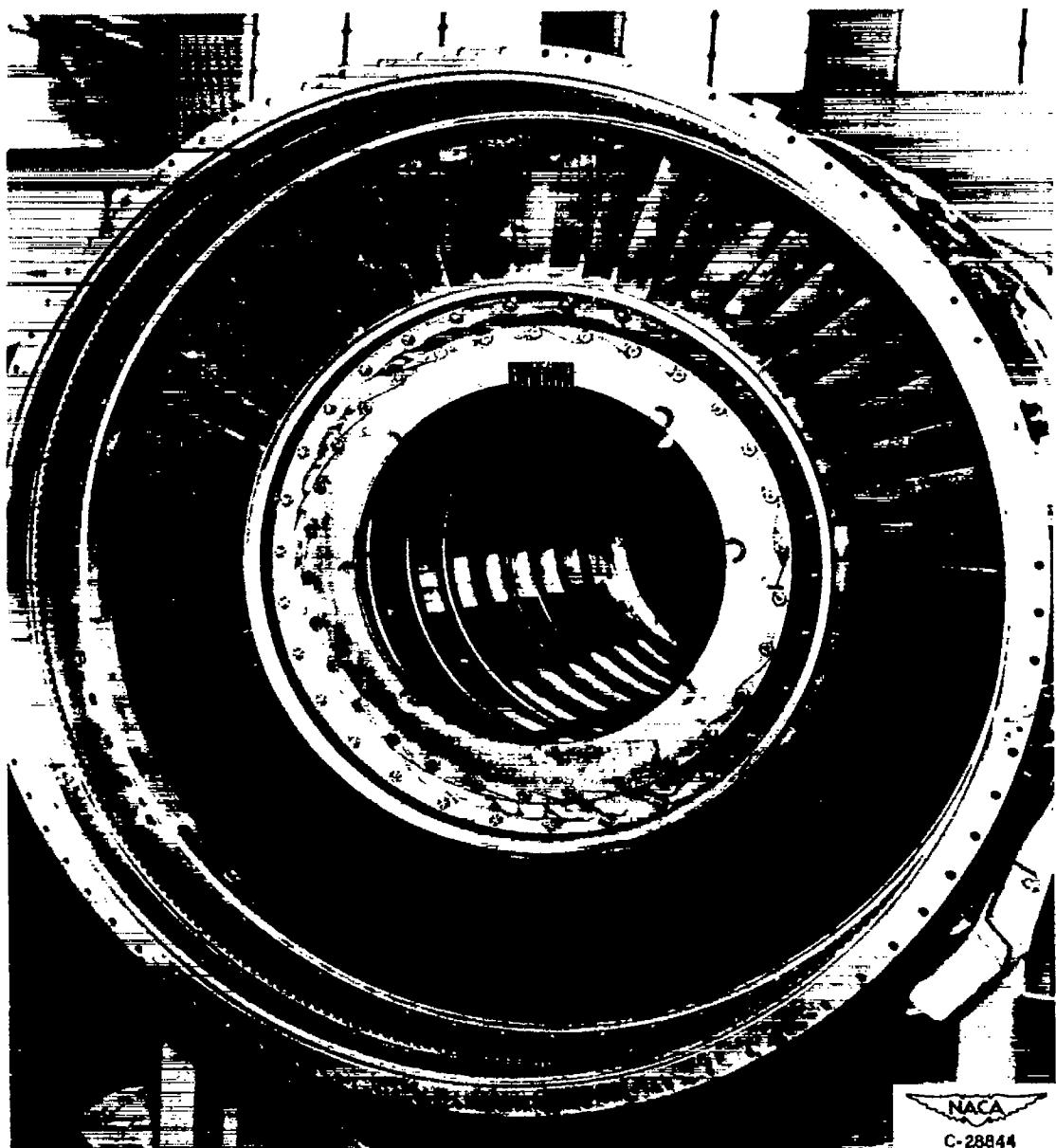
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(a) Open.

Figure 4. - Photographs of variable-area turbine nozzles.

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(b) Closed.

Figure 4. - Concluded. Photographs of variable-area turbine nozzles.

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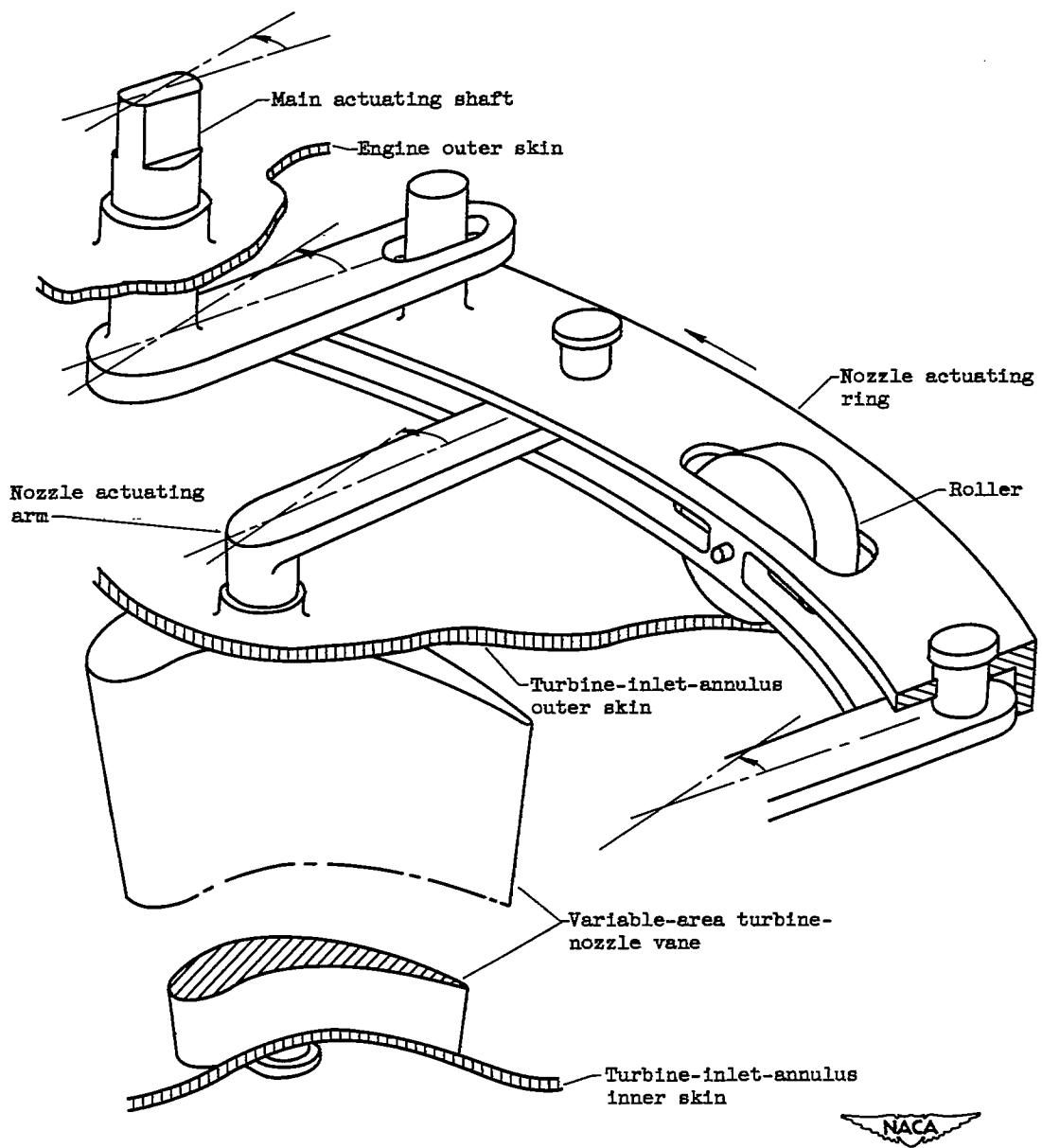
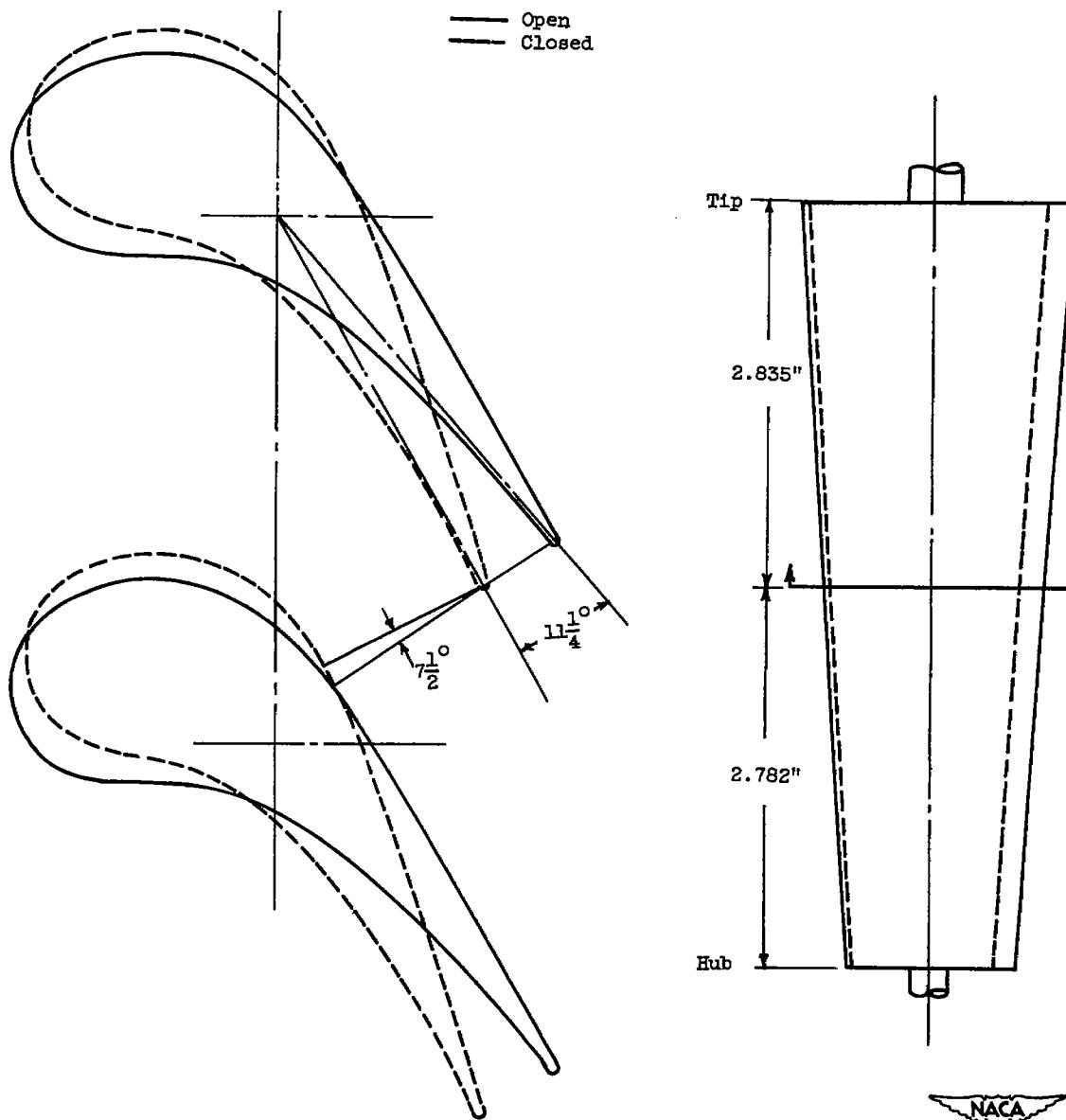


Figure 5. - Schematic sketch of variable-area turbine-nozzle actuating mechanism.

The NACA logo, featuring the acronym "NACA" above a stylized wing or aircraft profile.



(a) Mid-vane cross-sections of two adjacent vanes ($2\frac{1}{2}$ times actual size).

(b) Side view of vane (actual size).

Figure 6. - Sketches of variable-area turbine-nozzle vanes in open and closed positions.

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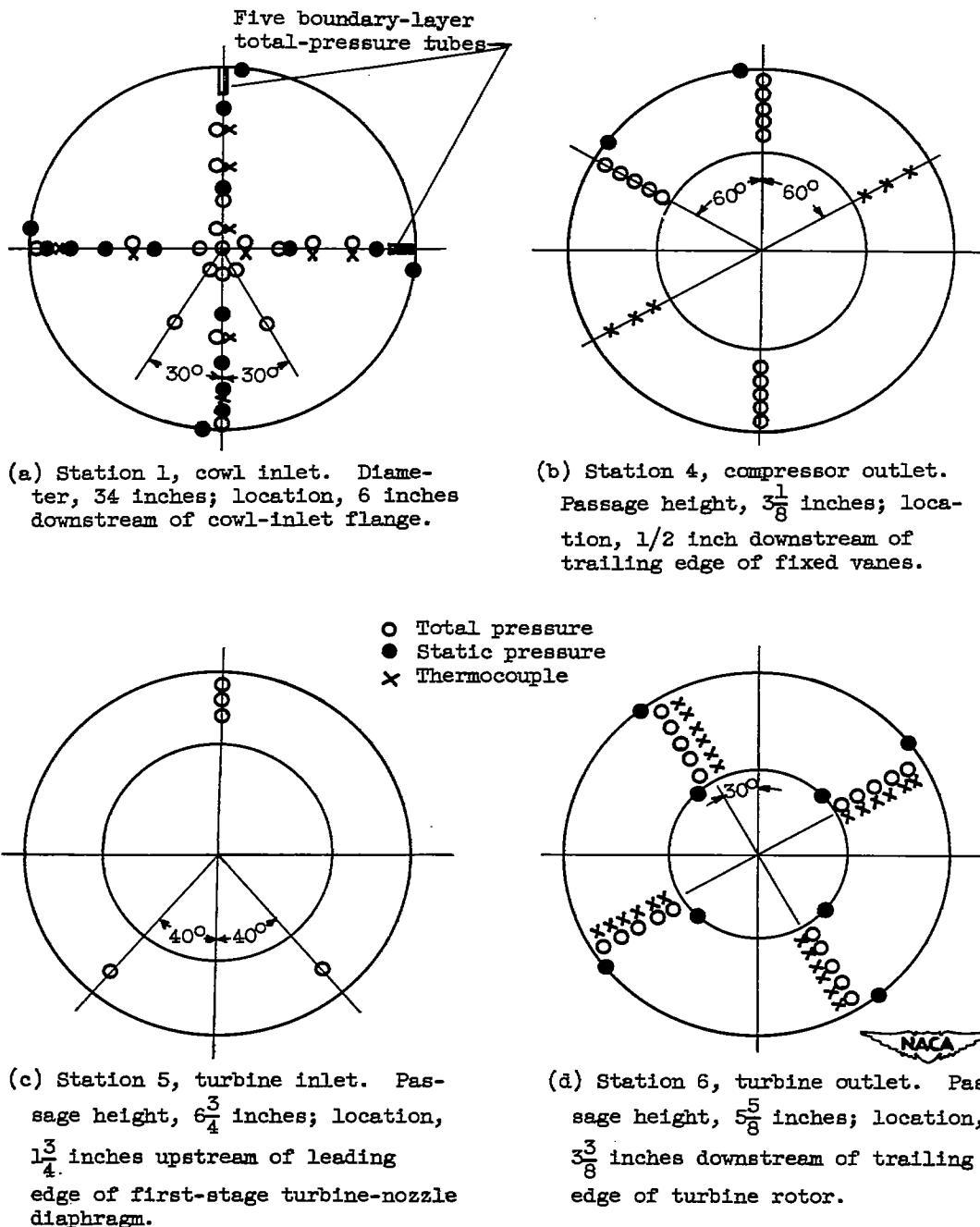


Figure 7. - Location of instrumentation (view looking downstream).

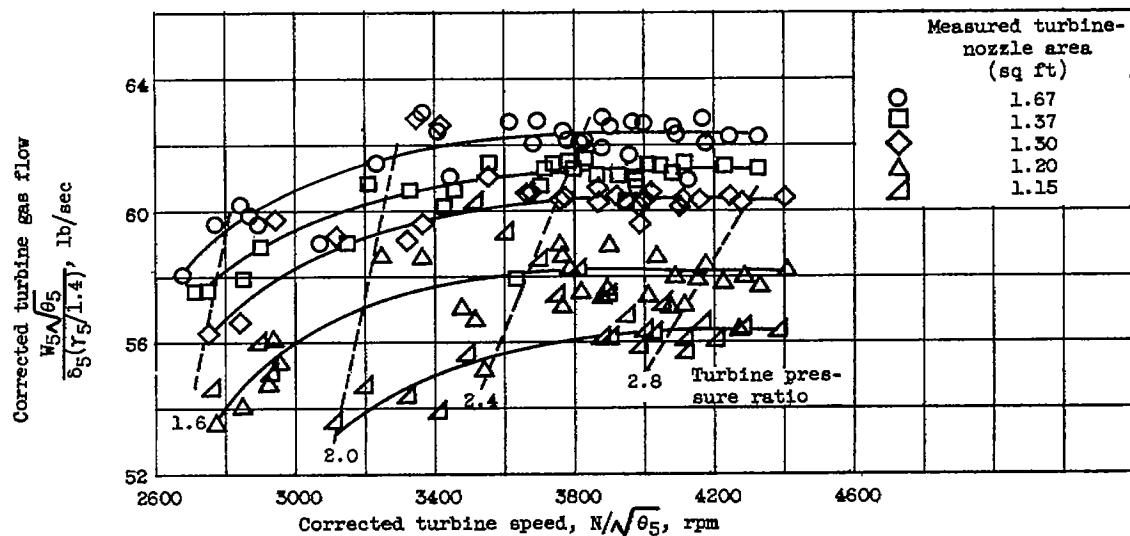


Figure 8. - Effect of turbine-nozzle area and corrected turbine speed on corrected turbine gas flow. Altitude, 30,000 feet; flight Mach number, 0.62.

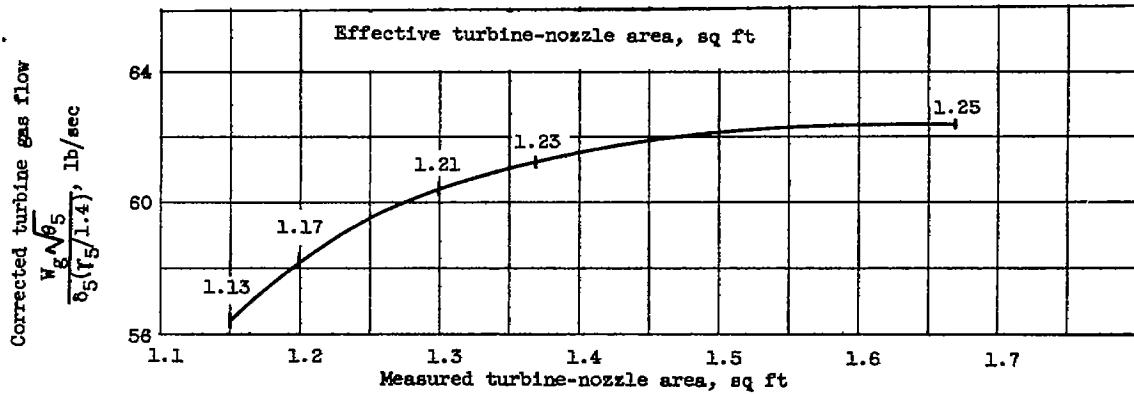


Figure 9. - Variation of maximum corrected turbine gas flow or effective turbine-nozzle area with measured turbine-nozzle area. Altitude 30,000 feet; flight Mach number, 0.62.

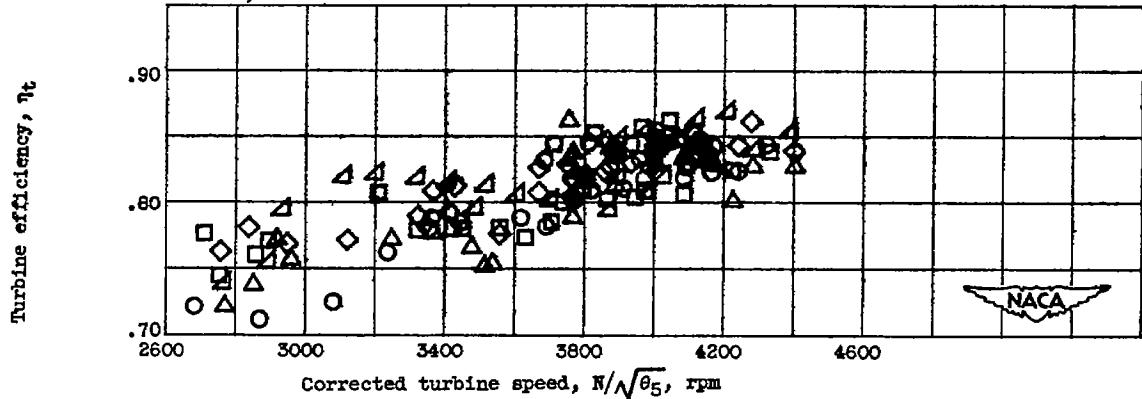
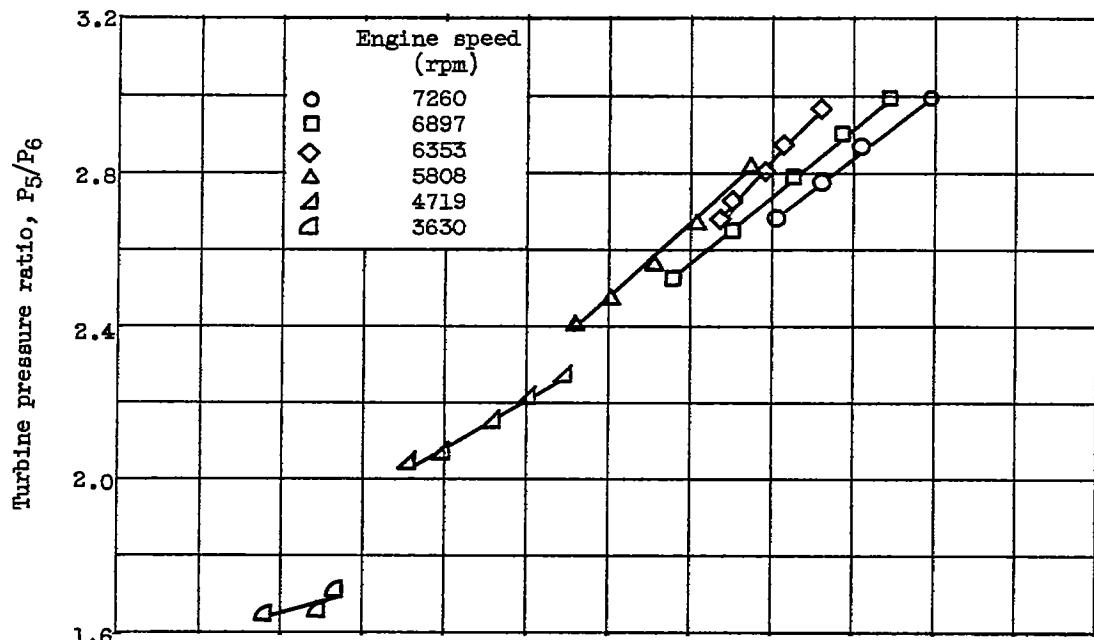
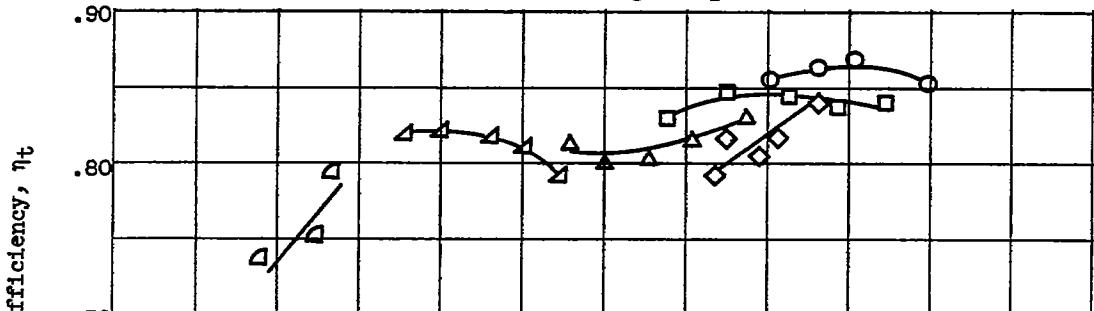


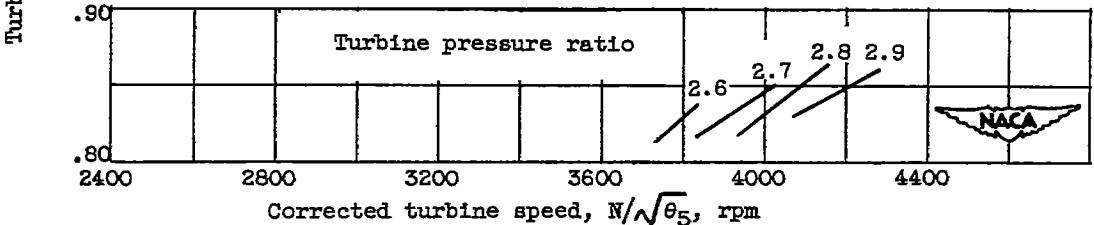
Figure 10. - Effect of turbine-nozzle area and corrected turbine speed on turbine efficiency. Altitude, 30,000 feet; flight Mach number, 0.62.



(a) Variation of turbine pressure ratio with corrected turbine speed at constant engine speeds.



(b) Variation of turbine efficiency with corrected turbine speed at constant engine speeds.



(c) Cross plots showing variation of turbine efficiency with corrected turbine speed at constant values of turbine pressure ratio.

Figure 11. - Effect of various parameters on turbine pressure ratio and turbine efficiency. Altitude, 30,000 feet; flight Mach number, 0.62; turbine nozzle area, 1.15 square feet.

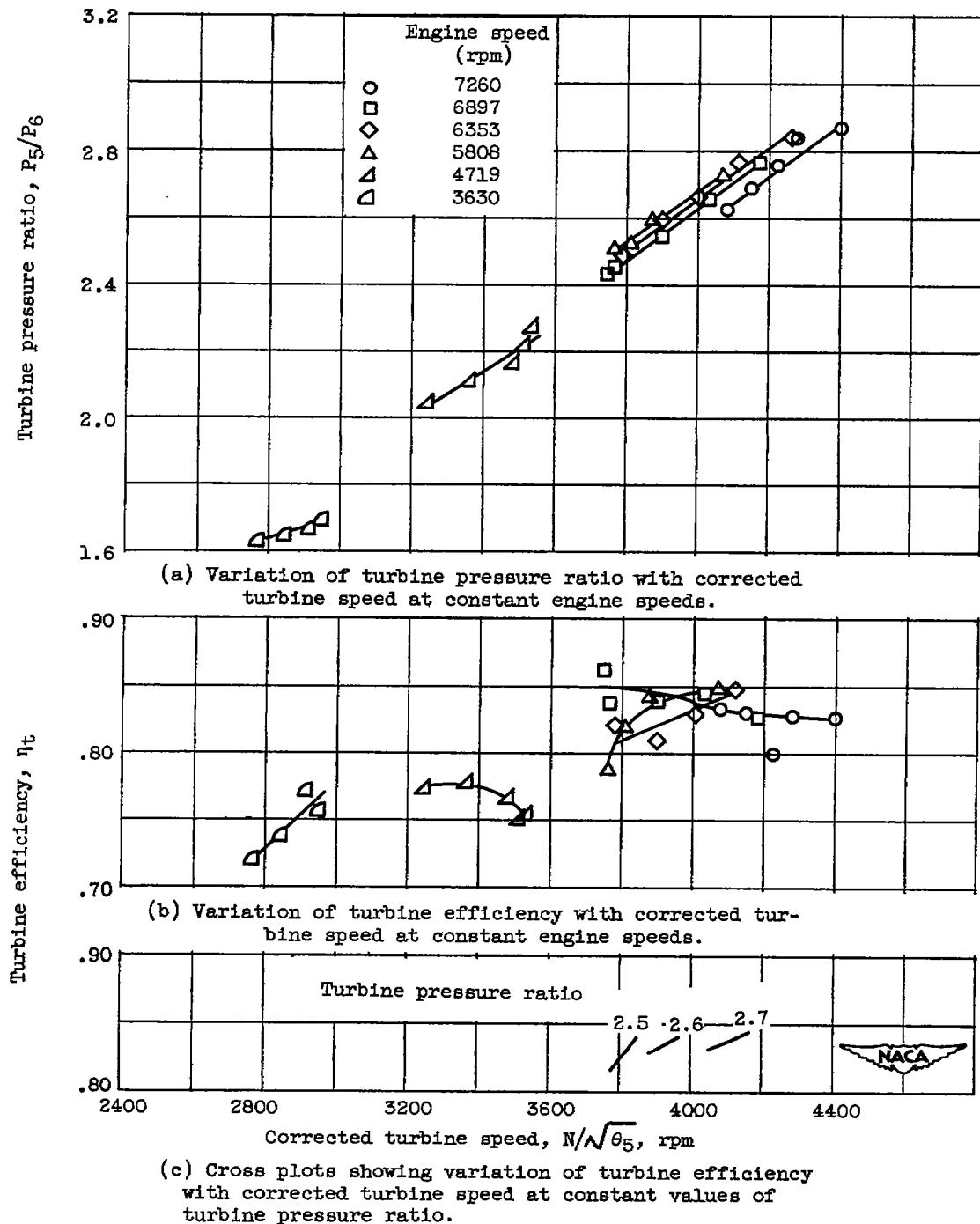


Figure 12. - Effect of various parameters on turbine pressure ratio and turbine efficiency. Altitude, 30,000 feet; flight Mach number, 0.62; turbine nozzle area, 1.20 square feet.

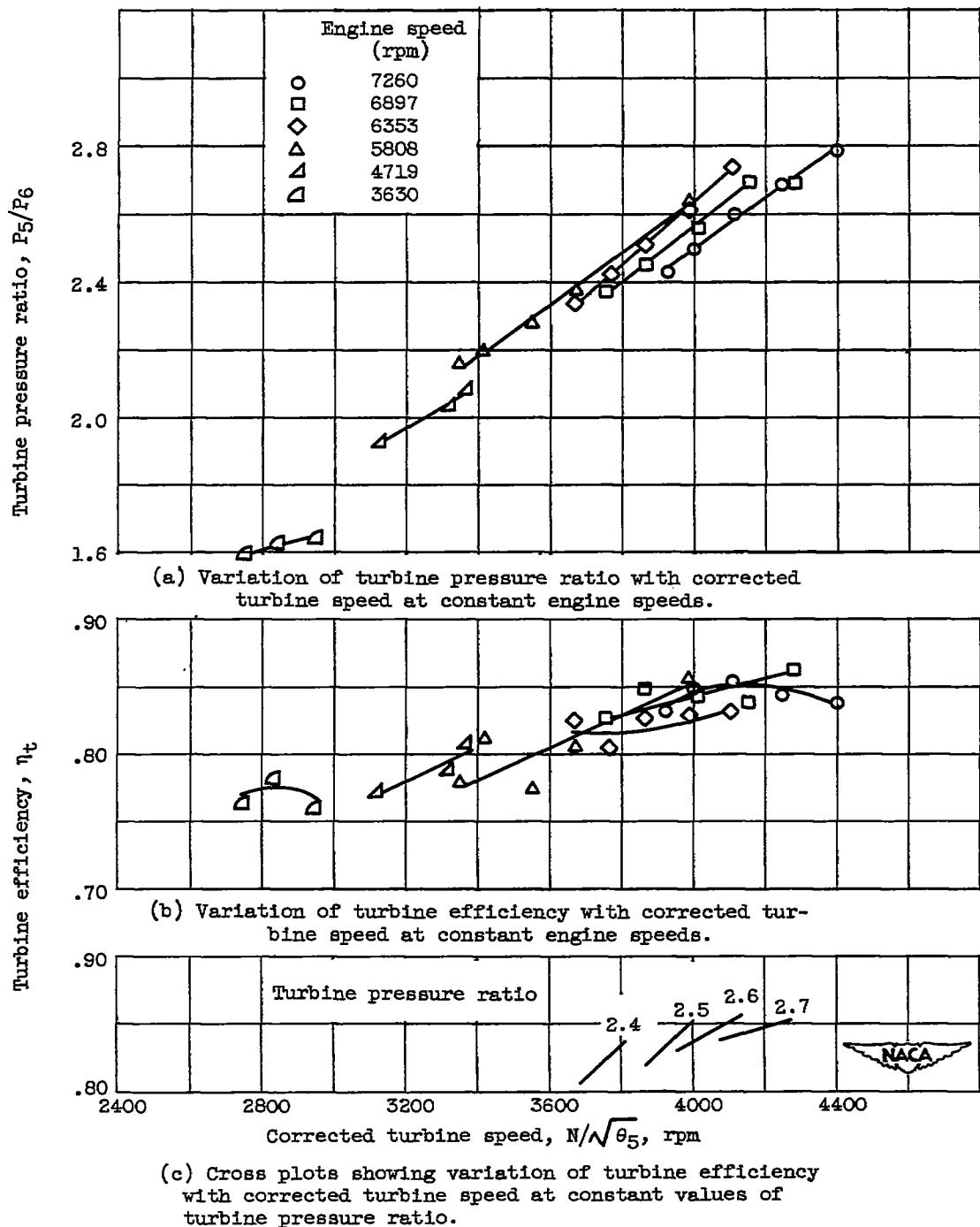


Figure 13. - Effect of various parameters on turbine pressure ratio and turbine efficiency. Altitude, 30,000 feet; flight Mach number, 0.62; turbine nozzle area, 1.30 square feet.

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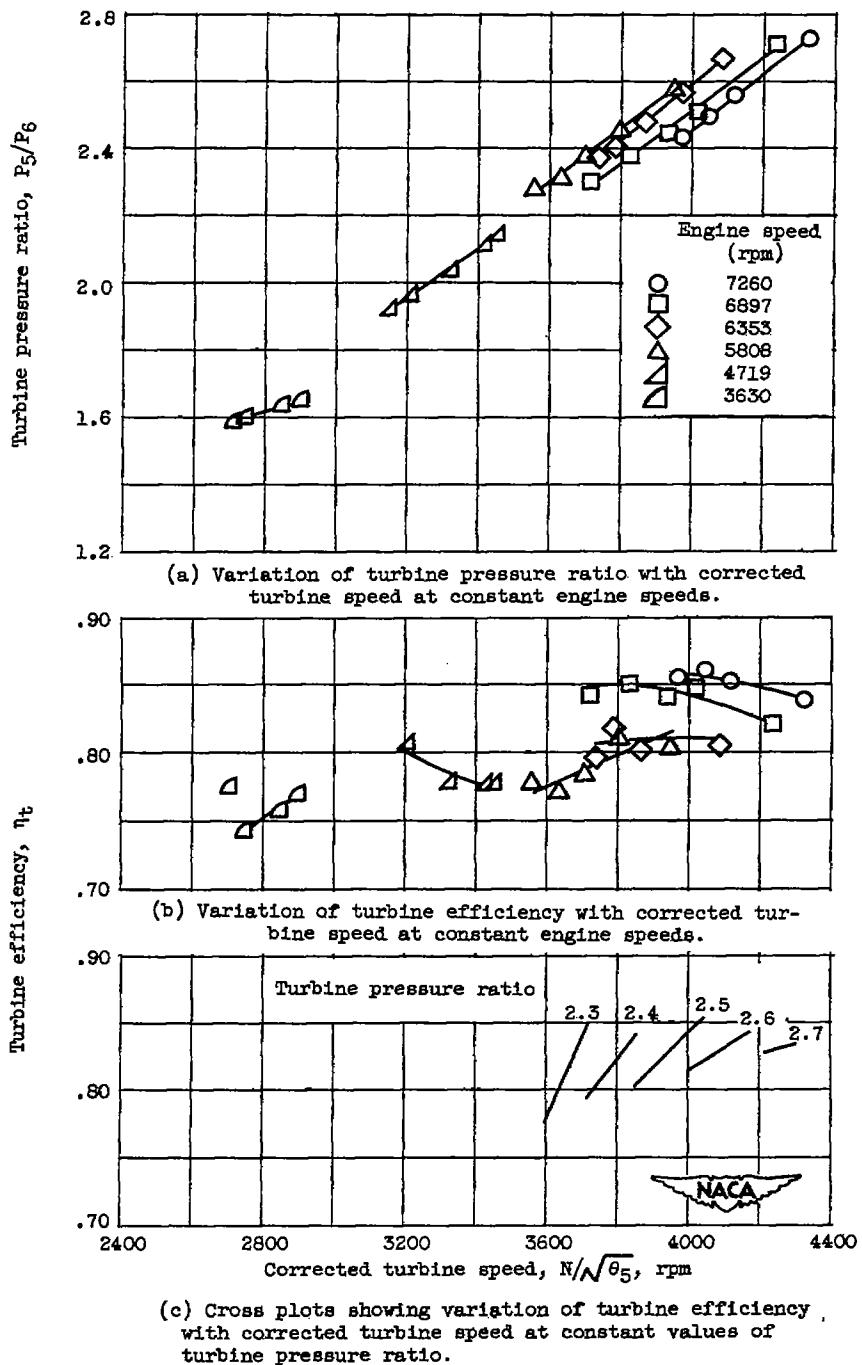


Figure 14. - Effect of various parameters on turbine pressure ratio and turbine efficiency.
Altitude, 30,000 feet; flight Mach number, 0.62; turbine nozzle area, 1.37 square feet.

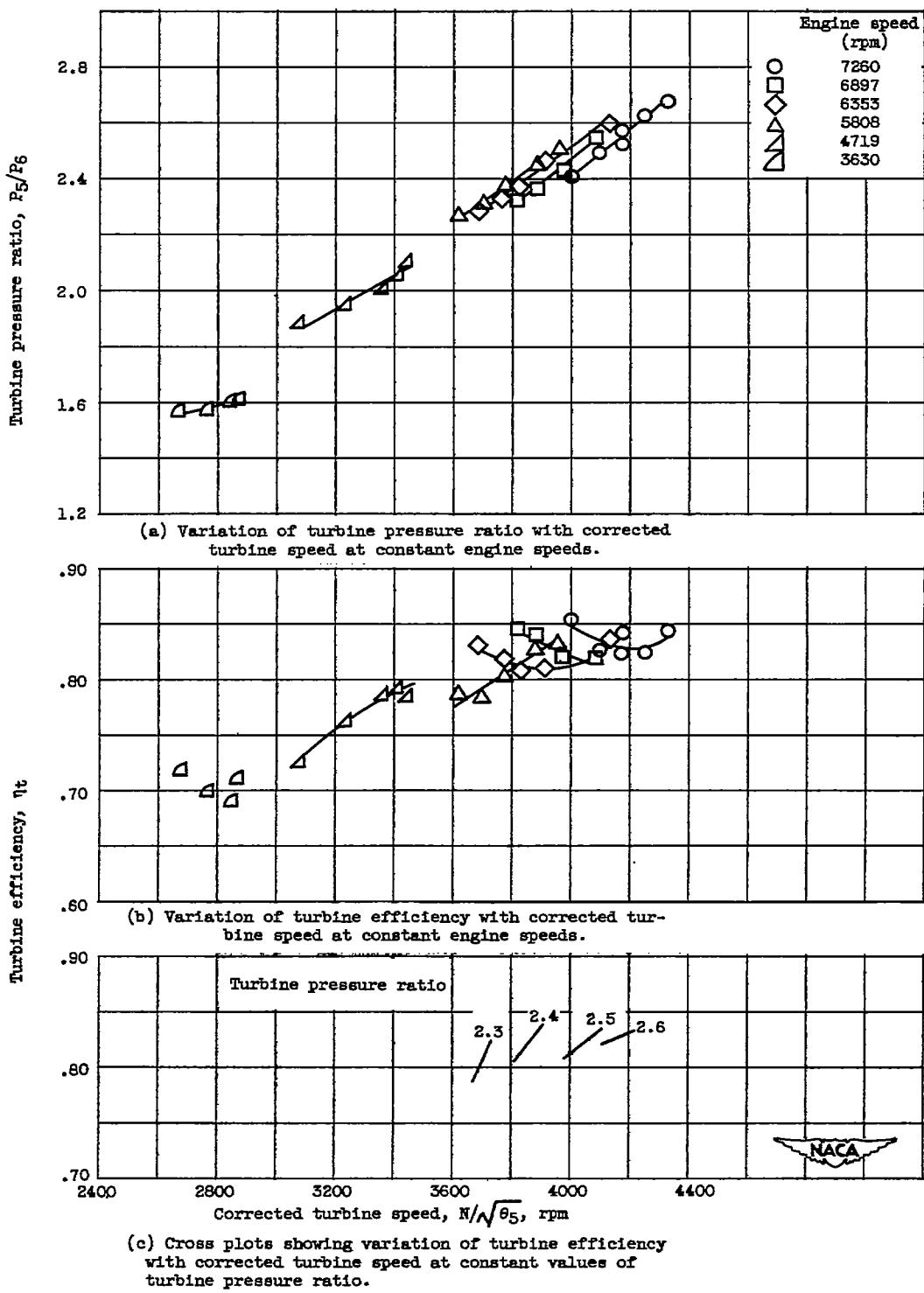


Figure 15. - Effect of various parameters on turbine pressure ratio and turbine efficiency.
Altitude, 30,000 feet; flight Mach number, 0.62; turbine nozzle area, 1.67 square feet.

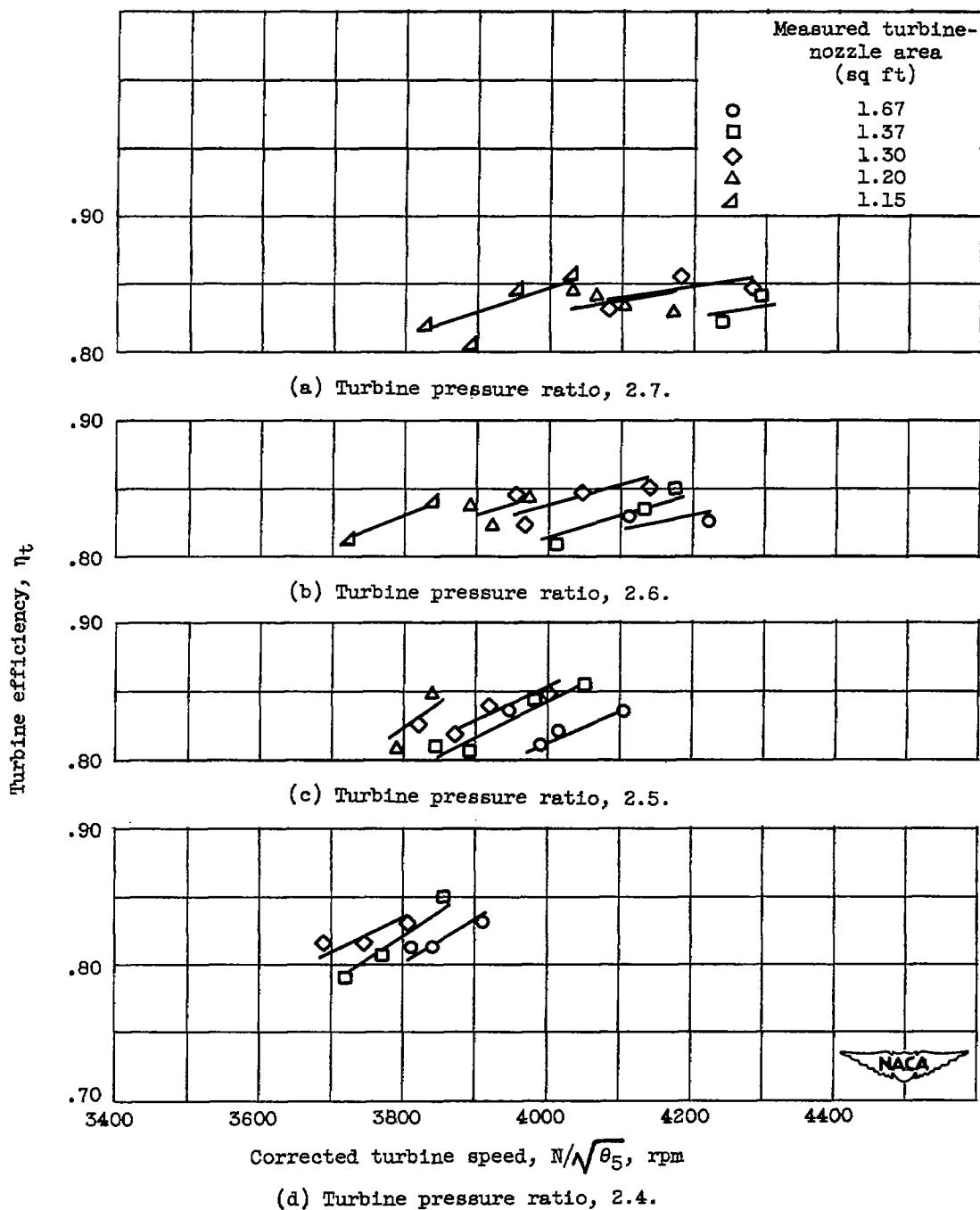


Figure 16. - Effect of turbine-nozzle area and corrected turbine speed on turbine efficiency at constant values of turbine pressure ratio. Altitude, 30,000 feet; flight Mach number, 0.62.

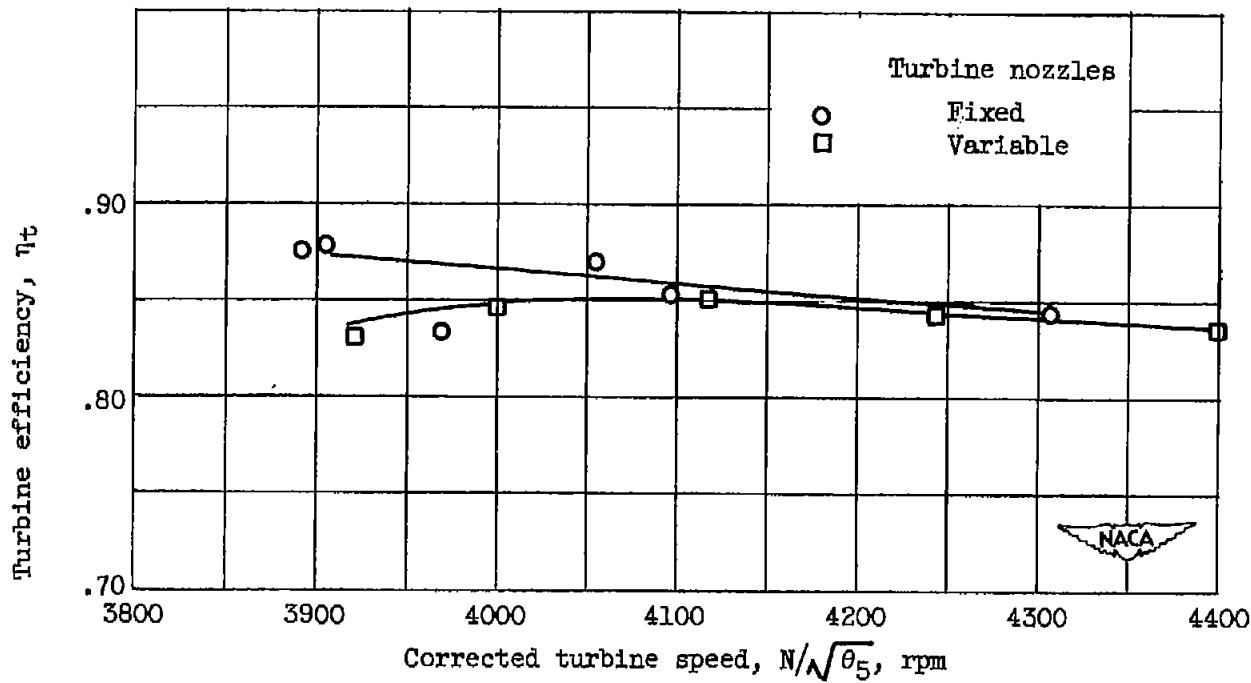


Figure 17. - Comparison of efficiencies obtained with fixed turbine nozzles and with variable-area turbine nozzles for an actual turbine-nozzle area of 1.30 square feet. Altitude, 30,000 feet; flight Mach number, 0.62; engine speed, 7260 rpm.

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